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Pat Quinn, Governor

Illinois Department of Commerce
and Economic Opportunity

Jack Lavin, Director



Illinois Sustainable Education Project (ISTEP)



Actions are sustainable when their economic, environmental, and social consequences do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

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dceo

The Illinois Sustainable Education Project provides education regarding energy efficiency, renewable energy, waste reduction, and the process of recycling to increase the awareness of the link between economic development and environmental protection; the environmental and economic consequences of our actions and values; and how informed decisions can move Illinois toward a more sustainable future.

ISTEP accomplishes these goals through the following programs:

- ISTEP Patch Program (K-6)
- Zero Waste Schools Grant Program (K-12 Schools)
- Lights for Learning Program (K-12)
- Hands-on Sustainable Education Demonstration Cases and Resources (K-Adult)
- Excellence in Sustainability Awards Program (K-12)
- Illinois Biofuels Program (4th Adult)
- Energy Bike Program (5th - Adult)

Educators Please Note: DCEO is a certified provider of CPDUs.



ISTEP PATCH PROGRAM (K-6)

The ISTEP Patch Program offers students who complete energy and recycling related activities an opportunity to earn a patch for their efforts. By participating in a variety of fun, hands-on, educational activities and community oriented projects, students in formal and non-formal educational settings learn about energy efficiency, renewable energy, source reduction, and recycling. Students may opt to take on challenges such as conducting energy

and waste audits in their schools and homes, conducting public awareness campaigns to reduce energy use and encourage recycling, and organizing drives to collect used books and clothing. Patch requirements are focused on grade levels K–3 and 4–6. Youth in organizations such as Scouts and 4-H may also earn the ISTEP patch.



ZERO WASTE SCHOOLS GRANT PROGRAM (K – 12 Schools)

The goal, through zero waste activities and practices, is for schools to create more productive learning environments, reduce operating costs, and eliminate solid waste from landfills.

Consistent with the Governor's Safe and Healthy Schools Initiative, DCEO has expanded and improved upon the former Recycling and Waste Reduction Grant Program to encourage schools across Illinois to strive to become "waste-free," where virtually all waste generated at the school is reduced, reused, or recycled. Grant funds may be used to purchase containers and equipment to collect and store recycled material at schools, to implement source reduction activities, to reduce waste generation, and to implement composting projects. A maximum of \$10,000 per school may be requested. Grant awards are based on the applicant's proposed plan to attain Zero Waste status and utilize funds in the most cost effective manner.



LIGHTS FOR LEARNING PROGRAM (K-12)

The Lights for Learning (L4L) program is a great way to raise money for your school or organization while educating students and community members about the environmental and economic benefits of compact fluorescent light

bulbs (CFLs). L4L is a fundraiser for schools in which students sell energy efficient CFLs that can last up to 10 times longer than an incandescent bulb while using 75% less energy. Schools or organizations earn a 50% profit plus a bonus of up to \$1,000 based upon the number of participating students. Educational assemblies are provided by program representatives at no charge.



SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION DEMONSTRATION CASES (K – Adult)

Three different on-loan demonstration cases provide hands-on activities and resources for schools, scouts, and other groups to teach students about the benefits of recycling, vermi-composting, and energy efficiency.

- **The Case for Investigating the 4 Rs.** Demonstrate the exciting ways recycling old products into new products can save money, resources, and energy. Students are often fascinated by the fact that a soda bottle can be turned into a t-shirt!
- **EEEEK! There's a Worm in My Room!** Use the videos, books, and other information in the vermi-case to learn how to create a worm bin for your classroom, home, or organization. Worms digest food waste, turning it into the richest soil amendment on the planet. They require little care (no visits to the vet), and are a fun learning project for educators, children, and adults.
- **WATT-ever!! Energy Efficiency Demo Case.** Help students understand the importance of energy conservation not only for its impact on the environment, but also on our pocket-books! This case contains a Light Comparator

Meter and Watts Up? Meter to demonstrate the amount of electricity used to power various appliances and light bulbs. Activities and videos are also included.

The cases are available for loan to any school or organization for two weeks. The reservation forms may be downloaded from our website at www.ISTEP.org.



SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION RESOURCES (K – Adult)

Are you looking for something useful, yet fun and educational, to hand out in your classroom, to your troop or group, or at public events? ISTEP has a number of bookmarks available promoting the benefits of the 4Rs (reduce, reuse, recycle, rethink), energy efficiency, ethanol, and renewable energy such as wind power. The bookmarks are free, available in reasonable quantities, and may be viewed on our website at www.ISTEP.org.



EXCELLENCE IN SUSTAINABILITY AWARDS (K-12 Schools)

ISTEP recognizes K-12 students, teachers, and non-formal educational groups for their efforts and achievements in waste reduction, energy efficiency, and other areas of sustainability through the Excellence in Sustainability Awards program.

The awards program encourages projects that will have the greatest impact and longest lasting results. For example, an energy efficiency project could include a school energy audit, campaign to use energy wisely, or results from participation in our Lights for Learning Program. A renewable energy project could

include using ISTEP biofuels resources in classroom activities. Recycling projects should begin with recycling as many commodities as possible, such as paper, plastic, steel, glass and aluminum. Implementing waste free lunch days, two-sided copying and one note home per family are all source reduction practices that are eligible award activities.

To be considered for recognition through the ISTEP Excellence in Sustainability Award program, the group or classroom (with an adult advisor), must have completed the necessary requirements during the current school year, provide documentation of the project, and submit the application and pertinent materials to ISTEP staff by the spring deadline. All students who participate will receive a certificate recognizing their accomplishments and each school or group submitting a project will receive an award plaque. All applications will be evaluated and scored by previously set criteria. The top 15 scored applicants will be invited to attend an awards luncheon in May at the Governor's Mansion in Springfield. (For requirements and application form go to www.ISTEP.org.)



ILLINOIS BIOFUELS PROGRAM (4th – Adult)

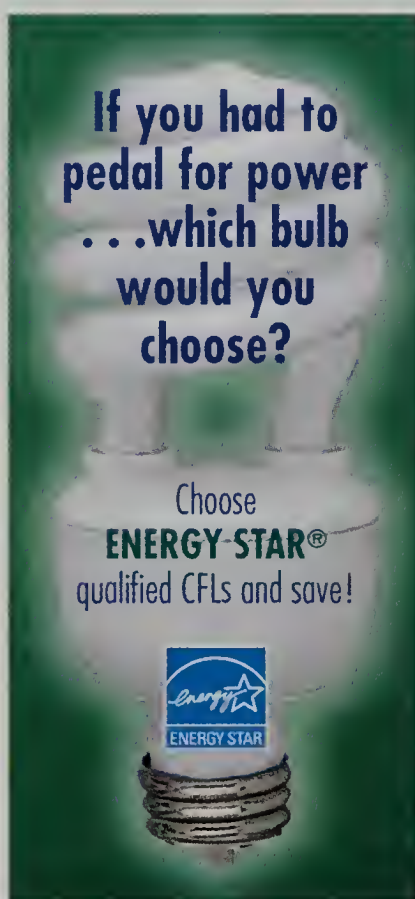
The development and use of biofuels is becoming increasingly important as our nation is faced with rising prices, dwindling domestic supplies, and the instability of foreign sources of petroleum. There is a need to educate students, teachers, parents, and the public about ethanol and biodiesel, and encourage them to evaluate its economic and environmental impacts.

Recognizing this need, ISTEP partnered with the Great Lakes Biomass State and Regional Partnership, the Governors' Ethanol Coalition, Renewable Fuels Association, the National Energy Education Development (NEED) Project, and the National Biodiesel Board to develop training workshops for 4-12 educators and provide up-to-date biofuels educational materials that will serve as learning guides to students, parents, educators and the public. Workshop participants receive free educational material and free two week rental of hands-on Science of Energy kits for classroom use.



ENERGY BIKE PROGRAM **(5th – Adult)**

The Energy Bike is a human-powered stationary bicycle equipped with a zero air pollution generator that delivers electricity to a display board of incandescent and compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). It allows the cyclist to power incandescents and CFLs by pedaling the bike. The cyclist can actually feel and observe their energy being transformed into light and heat.



The Energy Bike is a fun, hands-on learning tool and an appealing way to engage adults and children in conversations about energy efficiency and energy conservation.

Please visit our website,
www.ISTEP.org
for more information about
ISTEP programs.

ISTEP CONTACTS

DCEO

Bureau of Energy and Recycling
Communications and Education Division
620 East Adams
Springfield, IL 62701

Peggy Chamness

peggy_chamness@commerce.state.il.us
217/785-2765

Rebecca Enrietto

rebecca_enrietto@commerce.state.il.us
217/785-3986

Brett Ivers

brett_ivers@commerce.state.il.us
217/524-5859

Bina Fleck

bina_fleck@commerce.state.il.us
217/524-1838

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